



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

**Frank J. Magill,
United States Attorney**

David Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist
(612) 664-5684; cell: (612) 730-2251

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, Sept. 8, 2008

Zimmerman man fined for killing a gray wolf

A 46-year-old Zimmerman man was sentenced last week in federal court in connection with the killing of a gray wolf in northern Minnesota during a hunting trip in 2002.

United States Magistrate Judge Raymond Erickson sentenced Steven Alan Taylor to two years probation during which Taylor may not hunt anywhere in the U.S. and a \$2,500 fine. Taylor was sentenced Sept. 3 in Duluth.

Judge Erickson ruled on June 20 that Taylor shot and killed the wolf near Isabella Township without being permitted to do so. At the time of the shooting, the gray wolf was listed as a threatened wildlife species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Taylor was charged on Aug. 9, 2007, and a day-long bench trial took place on Nov. 7, 2007.

Court testimony indicated that Taylor and his hunting party hunted in the area near Shamrock Lake on Nov. 20-23, 2002. Witnesses testified that they heard two shots, and asked Taylor if he got any deer. Taylor replied that he shot two wolves.

Witnesses also testified that Taylor was using a semi-automatic rifle during that weekend. However, the weapon was later destroyed in 2003 because Taylor felt that he was being watched by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and FWS.

A DNR warden observed a gray wolf that had been shot laying next to a deer stand on Dec. 12, 2002. A necropsy of the wolf determined that it could have been shot by someone in the deer stand, which was used by members of Taylor's hunting party. Two expended shell casings from a semi-automatic rifle were also found near the stand.

When the wolf was first listed as endangered in the 1970s, only a few hundred remained in Minnesota. Recovery efforts have increased the gray wolf population and helped assure its survival.

This case was the result of an investigation by FWS and the DNR, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney LeeAnn K. Bell.

